

Applying Lessons of Trust in Future Command Arrangements

**A Monograph
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Abstract

Applying Lessons of Trust in Future Command Arrangements by Major Robert V. Lankford, USAF, 39 pages.

This monograph elucidates lessons of trust learned through the study of historical command relationships between soldier and airman. The purpose of this monograph is to highlight the need to apply the lessons learned from these case studies in today's operating environment. To accomplish this purpose, the work examines three historical case studies: Generals Bradley and Quesada in WWII, Generals Schwarzkopf and Horner in Operation Desert Storm, and Generals Clark and Short in Operation Allied Force. By illustrating differing airpower conceptualizations in these case studies, this monograph examines efforts to establish solid relationships built on trust and competence needed to overcome these conceptual differences to accomplish the mission. Beginning with a review of early airpower theory and concepts, the first case study examines both sides of competing airpower concepts as well as the individual officers' thoughts on the employment of airpower. The chapter then highlights the existing command structure these officers operated within, specifically noting the command arrangements in place and where each officer stood in this chain of command in relation to his counterpart. The second case study begins with a brief glimpse into the importance and evolution of AirLand Battle doctrine, focusing on its impact on airpower conceptualization. The chapter then examines the trust General Schwarzkopf had for General Horner, and how Horner fostered that trust through competence. The last relationship examined is an example of a lack of trust between airman and soldier, and the impact it had on future airpower conceptualization. The final chapter begins by identifying the contextual differences in today's operating environment and then highlights command and control nodes where the airman and soldier interact. The monograph then elucidates conclusions drawn from studying the selected command relationships. The conclusions focus on the contextual commonalities and differences within the study, and clearly demonstrate the need for trust based on competence in today's operating environment. By showing shortcomings in airpower expertise available to the decision maker and highlighting where airmen and soldiers interact, opportunities to apply the lessons learned become clear. This monograph concludes by showing that command and control structures that foster trust through competence can bridge the gap created by conceptual differences in airpower application. Command structures that bring airpower expertise to the supported commander allow for a synergistic application of the tools at the disposal of the commander.

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Chapter One

Differences regarding the proper employment of airpower have existed since the military began using airplanes. While differences about how to employ airpower linger, key leaders have bridged these differences through interpersonal relationships. During WWII, Major General Elwood “Pete” Quesada and Lieutenant General Omar Bradley forged a relationship that ultimately led to the Allied breakout from the beachhead following Operation Overlord, despite prevailing service disagreements about airpower. Similarly, the relationship between Lieutenant General Chuck Horner and General Norman Schwarzkopf in 1991 ensured overwhelming battlefield success during Operation Desert Storm. Seven years later during Operation Allied Force, Lieutenant General Michael Short and General Wesley Clark formed a team that forced Slobodan Milosevic to capitulate without inserting substantial ground forces—despite a strained relationship. These examples span the spectrum of teamwork and interoperability, and are rarely as simple and straightforward as they seem. Examining each of these in their context will provide valuable insights to strengthen future command relationships.

Thesis

This overview of selected command constructs begs the question: How do we harness the historical experiences of operational level commanders that forged the air ground team for application in today’s wholly different operating environment? The answer comes from examining the nature of the relationship between commanders in their own context. Examining historic air ground partnerships in this manner shows that solid relationships built on trust between commanders are vital to military success.

Methodology

Answering the research question requires a structured approach to fully examine the role of airpower employment conceptualization as it relates to airman-soldier command relationships. Analyzing the differences (or similarities) in airpower concepts sets the stage for this examination by providing a common understanding of the issues complicating the air-ground teamwork. After illustrating differing

airpower conceptualizations, this monograph then examines efforts to establish solid relationships—built on trust and competence—needed to overcome these conceptual differences to accomplish the mission.

Chapter Two centers on a WWII command relationship—specifically, the relationship between Major General Pete Quesada and Lieutenant General Omar Bradley in the European Theater of Operations (ETO). Beginning with a review of early airpower theory and concepts, this chapter examines both sides of the competing conceptualization as well as the individual officers’ thoughts on the employment of airpower. The chapter then highlights the existing command structure these officers operated within, specifically noting the command arrangements in place and where each officer stood in this chain of command in relation to his counterpart. Additionally, Chapter Two attends to the efforts to build a solid working relationship and the results achieved in Operation Cobra. As an example of the efforts to build a solid relationship, the two generals worked side by side so much that “a single grenade could have killed both Bradley and Quesada.”¹

Chapter Three begins with a brief glimpse into the importance and evolution of AirLand Battle doctrine. AirLand Battle was Army doctrine, and while the Air Force understood the precepts, it was not an Air Force concept. In this light, the air scheme of maneuver employed during Operation Desert Storm was a blend of AirLand Battle and the unproven theory of Col John Warden. This contextual and conceptual examination serves as a backstop for the relationship between Lieutenant General Horner and General Schwarzkopf during Operation Desert Storm. Their relationship is then examined in terms trust and competence; the trust given by Schwarzkopf and the competence exemplified by Horner.

In contrast to the first two relationships examined, Chapter Four turns to the strained relationship between Lieutenant General Short and General Clark during Operation Allied Force. As with the previous examples, the chapter begins with the examination of airpower employment concepts. This review highlights the significance of Lieutenant General Michael Short and General Wesley Clark’s

¹ Thomas Alexander Hughes, *Overlord: General Pete Quesada and the Triumph of Tactical Air Power in World War II* (New York: Free Press, 2002), 156.

disagreement on the application of airpower during Allied Force in light of the scope and nature of the mission at hand. However, in contrast to the previous two case studies, efforts to foster a solid relationship built on trust and competence did not exist. As such, the relatively quick resolution of Operation Allied Force came as a surprise to those involved.

Chapter Five begins with a study of the nature of the current operating environment, highlighting differences in the nature of the conflict of the previous case studies. This is followed by an analysis of the command and control nodes in place, specifically the joint air component coordination element and the air support operations center. These entities are the existing organizations to which the lessons drawn from the previous case studies can be best applied.

The chapter then elucidates conclusions drawn from studying the selected command relationships. The conclusions focus on the contextual commonalities and differences within the study, and clearly demonstrate the need for trust based on competence in today's operating environment. By showing shortcomings in airpower expertise available to the decision maker, the lessons learned will allow future command architectures will begin from a better position.

Chapter Two

Early Airpower Theory and Concepts

The conceptual nature of airpower was a significant reason for differences between ground commanders and air proponents about airpower employment. From the Army contracting the Wright Brothers to teach military pilots how to fly, to the musings of Giulio Douhet, the early days provided little more than promise. Furthermore, when the airplane first saw combat during WWI, its capabilities were nowhere near airpower's espoused potential. This reality led to General John J. Pershing to comment on the fliers' tendency to attach "too much importance" to missions behind enemy lines for the purpose of interrupting communications. Pershing asserted "this was of secondary importance during the battle, as aviators were then expected to assist our ground troops."² In general, the "assisting our ground troops" consisted of aerial reconnaissance and artillery spotting as aircraft capabilities limited its use.

However, as the airplane became more sophisticated during the interwar period, airpower theory kept pace. Emboldened by the advance of the bomber, General Arnold pointed out that, when the United States entered World War II, the air arm "had some solid theories of its own, even if they had been tested only in peacetime and by observation on the battle fronts abroad."³ Led by the industrial web theory, the Army Air Corps aimed to destroy the will of the people by targeting the vital links in the industrial economic structure of the enemy, a structure that was further strained by the requirements of war.

This theory was debatably geared to allow airpower to win the war on its own. The doctrine of the time reflected this sentiment. In 1935, Training regulation (TR) 440-15 presented a significant shift from the prevailing thought about airpower. It "established a General Headquarters (GHQ) Air Force, bringing all military combat aviation under the command of a single airman, and allowed the GHQ AF to launch deep penetration bombardment against the enemy homeland, when not occupied with its first

² Thomas H. Greer, *The Development of Air Doctrine in the Army Air Arm, 1917-1941* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, U.S. Air Force, 1985), 4.

³ Ibid.

priority—army cooperation.”⁴ By 1942, airpower doctrine was expanding to include the multitude of employment possibilities. For example, FM 31-35, Air-Ground Operations, prescribed the employment of air forces in support of ground operations, and was championed by Army Ground Forces officers.⁵ That said, the prevailing theory and evolving concepts espoused by AAF officers led to 1943 Field Manual (FM) 100-20. This manual “represented a unilateral declaration of independence that proclaimed the equality of air and ground forces, and regulated close air support to the third priority of tactical air force tasks.”⁶ This ultimately led to the establishment of U.S. Strategic Air Forces in the European and Pacific theaters and was one of several factors leading to the establishment of an independent Air Force after WWII.

In sum, the differing conceptualizations about airpower employment created a rift between airman and soldier regarding the combat application of airplanes. Army Ground Force and Army Air Force officers would have to work together to harness the evolving combat power provided by the airplane. Set against this theoretical and conceptual backdrop, the first case study follows.

Quesada and Bradley

First Army Commander Omar Bradley and Ninth Tactical Air Command Commander Pete Quesada exemplified cooperation between airman and soldier in the European Theater of Operations, specifically in Operation Cobra. This cooperation was, in part, due to the command and control structure in place during Cobra. Although the command structure morphed several times as the Allies expanded their operations further into the continent following the Normandy invasion, the Allied Expeditionary Air Force (AEAF) and Twenty First Army Group remained on equal echelons in the chain of command, both

⁴ Richard G. Davis, *The 31 Initiatives: A Study in Air Force - Army Cooperation*, (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2002), 7.

⁵ Paul J. Montgomery, “Toward Greater Cooperation? FM 100-5 and AFDD 1” (master’s thesis, Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS), 12.

⁶ Davis, *The 31 Initiatives*, 8.

under the direct control of the Supreme Allied Commander. The AEAF was responsible for coordinating the proper use of the air force in support of the fledgling ground offense on the continent. On the American side, the AEAF comprised of the IX Air Force, which consisted of fighters, fighter-bombers, light and medium bombers and transport aircraft. Operationally, it was organized as a fighter command, bomber command, an air defense command, and a service command. The fighter command organized and trained the tactical air command (TAC).⁷ As commander of the fighter command and IX TAC, General Quesada owned seventeen fighter groups on the continent supporting nineteen American Divisions.⁸ General Quesada supported General Bradley's First Army which consisted of eight units: V Corps, VII Corps, VIII Corps, XIX Corps, Airborne units of the 82d and 101st Divisions and 2d Airborne Brigade. It is noteworthy that the American IX Air Force provided support to Bradley's First Army—the US component of the 21st Army Group. In other words, Quesada was Bradley's airman.

While the prevailing thought within the Air Corps focused on the Air Corps Tactical School (ACTS) strategic bombing theory, General Quesada did not necessarily agree. To this point, during a wargame at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) at Fort Leavenworth, he prophetically offered, "future war will require all sorts of arrangements between the air and the ground, and the two will have to work closer than a lot of people think or want."⁹ During his formative years as a Captain, Quesada attended both the ACTS and CGSC. In doing this, he began to see war from the ground perspective, and understood what they were being taught. He understood that CGSC "was primarily concerned with the workings of corps and division ground operations, and necessarily dealt with tactical aviation when it dealt with airpower at all."¹⁰

⁷ Benjamin F. Cooling, *Case Studies in the Development of Close Air Support* (Washington, DC: U.S. G.P.O, 1990), 238.

⁸ Hughes, *Overlord*, 224.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 63.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 61.

Quesada's thoughts on airpower employment are illustrated by his dealings with strategic bombing zealots. "I had little patience for those who turned out quite parochial regarding air-ground matters. I tried at first to move them around a bit, but eventually I sent the bad ones home. It usually meant the end of their careers."¹¹ His open mindset served him well when as he found himself in charge of the IX Fighter Command, with a wide degree of latitude and responsible for the air support aspect of Operation Overlord. To foster a sense of confidence, Quesada pledged to Omar Bradley to drill his pilots in artillery spotting, a tactical task deemed unworthy of pilots by the strategic bombing enthusiasts. Furthermore, he invited every general participating in Operation Overlord to his headquarters for consultation.¹² His conviction for supporting the ground forces involved in the invasion moved beyond lip service. He wrote to Major General Cannon (a renowned tactical aviator serving in Italy), "My job is very much like the one you are now performing in that I work side by side with the Army. I am wondering if you have any literature that your headquarters has prepared on the subject of supporting ground forces?"¹³ When there proved to be a dearth of literature on the subject, Quesada sent 227 officers to Major General Connor's headquarters over a sixty-day period.¹⁴ He forced his command to develop new attack procedures, ultimately proving his command's capabilities at ground attack missions.

General Quesada was unrelenting in his pursuit of seamless air support. To this point, Quesada collocated his headquarters with Bradley's. This allowed both commanders and their staffs to enjoy an unrivaled amount of cooperation, ultimately resulting in daily air-ground conferences to determine air strike targets, and perhaps more importantly, helped to dispel the differences between airman and soldier.¹⁵ By living in the same conditions as the soldiers he was dedicated to helping, Quesada's peer

¹¹ Ibid., 116.

¹² Ibid., 123.

¹³ Ibid, 128.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., 157.

commanders realized he was going through the same difficulties they were, prompting General Bradley to note Quesada was “unlike most airmen who viewed ground support as a bothersome diversion to war in the sky.”¹⁶ Arguably the IX TAC commander’s efforts are the foundation of current close air support concepts. The most important of which is the improvement of communications between aircraft and ground units. To remedy his unit’s communication problems, Quesada outfitted selected tanks and aircraft with common radio equipment. He further bolstered this by putting pilots in tanks because he realized that “air and ground speak different languages, and what a tank driver may see a good landmark might be virtually invisible in the air.”¹⁷ Because not every tank was equipped with the radios capable of communicating with airplanes, Quesada’s staff scheduled airplanes over armored columns. Contrary to the prevailing thought and airpower employment doctrine, this simple—yet remarkable act—was possible because he owned the aircraft and the mission and was free to experiment as how to best provide support to General Bradley’s forces. His ideas would soon be tested under fire.

Operation Cobra

In July 1944, the Allies encountered stiff resistance following Operation Overlord. With his forces spread out along a line, the First Army Group Commander Lieutenant General Bradley conceived a plan to pierce the German resistance. His plan involved saturation bombing of an area approximately 4000 yards by 2500 yards using heavy bombers, 900 medium bombers, and 350 fighter-bombers.¹⁸ Bradley required the bombers to attack parallel to his front, not perpendicular so that the formations would not overfly Allied troops, and place them in danger of bombs dropped short. What General Bradley did not appreciate was the reality that bombs had a larger probability of error from lateral displacement (left to right in reference to the flight path) and the physical impossibility of getting a large

¹⁶ Omar N. Bradley, *A Soldier's Story* (New York: Modern Library, 1999), 249.

¹⁷ Hughes, *Overlord*, 184.

¹⁸ Richard G. Davis, *Carl A. Spaatz and the Air War in Europe* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. G.P.O, 1993), 464.

number of aircraft over the target area in a reasonable amount of time with a parallel attack run. These realities forced the Air planners, who were still in England, to alter the attack plan to run perpendicular and overfly Bradley's men enroute to the target area. Plagued by weather problems, the first mission was cancelled when the first echelon of the bombers were within ten minutes of the target area—too late to recall them all. Bombers that attacked the target deceived the Germans into believing they withstood the Allied attempts to pierce their defenses, and as a result they were not as dug in the next day, when the full force of the bombers decimated the area. Although Allied forces encountered some resistance, it was not nearly as tough as it would have been without the bombing effort. To this point, the German Division Commander offered the following about the bombing effort, "It was hell...the planes kept coming like a conveyor belt, and the bomb carpets came down...my front lines looked like a landscape on the moon, and at least seventy percent of my personnel were out of action—dead, wounded, crazed, or numb."¹⁹

Following the bombing, many commanders felt the plan failed because of continued German resistance limiting their advance. However, the VII Corps, led by their armor, pierced the fragile German defenses. In response, the IX TAC fighter-bombers began providing cover to the advancing armor, decimating what German defenses still stood by using a push close-air-support (CAS) system. The armor simply directed the aircraft towards their desired targets, and the fighter-bomber pilots destroyed whatever blocked their advance. In an impressive display of air-ground teamwork, fighter-bombers and tanks destroyed more than 100 German tanks and over 250 vehicles in one afternoon.²⁰ While there is some discrepancy over the exact figures of enemy losses at the hands of the IX TAC, Quesada's airmen flew over 9,000 sorties, destroying hundreds of tanks, and both motor and horse-drawn vehicles.²¹

¹⁹ Ibid., 472.

²⁰ Martin Blumenson, *The European Theater of Operations: Breakout and Pursuit* (Washington DC: Center for Military History, 1961), 279.

²¹ Russell F. Weigley, *Eisenhower's Lieutenants: The Campaigns of France and Germany, 1944-45* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1981), 165-166.

While the trust between Bradley and Quesada directly impacted the Allied breakout, the results in Operation Cobra were not all positive. A significant negative outcome resulted from the use of heavy bombers during the operation. Cobra was Bradley's brainchild, as he described it, "Realizing the great power we had in our Air Force, I wanted to secure someplace where we could use a great mass of power to virtually wipe out some German division opposing part of our line and then punch a whole through."²² However, since he had grown accustomed to General Quesada's unwavering support, he did not approach Allied air commanders about his plan until July 19.²³ This led to the difficulties he encountered with attack run-in directions. After gaining support for use of heavy bombers in Cobra, Bradley and Quesada left the details of the bombing aspect of the operation to the Allied air commanders in England. Bradley assumed his plan would be carried out as he directed, the same as IX TAC did in supporting the 21st Army group. This is directly related to a second mixed result. General Quesada was never a bomber pilot and as such, he probably understood the theoretical underpinnings of high altitude bombardment, but may not have been aware of some of the intricacies. As a result, he didn't realize the lateral displacement errors involved with high altitude bombardment, allowing General Bradley to derive a less than ideal bombardment plan. Similarly, Quesada never fully considered the suitability of Bradley's bomb line. While the road was a prominent ground feature, it was susceptible to obscuration from clouds as well as dust and smoke from the bombing, factors generally not applicable to low altitude fighter-bomber support provided by General Quesada's airmen. Operation Cobra's bombing efforts resulted in nearly 900 Allied casualties, including Lieutenant General Leslie McNair—prompting General Eisenhower to say he would never again use heavy bombers in a tactical role.²⁴

The relationship between Quesada and Bradley and the success during Operation Cobra highlight one significant lesson: trust must be accompanied by competence. These are inextricably linked and are

²² Davis, *Spaatz and the Air War in Europe*, 464.

²³ *Ibid.*, 465.

²⁴ Bradley, *A Soldier's Story*, 349.

vital to military success. Quesada went to great lengths to earn General Bradley's trust, which in turn allowed the inherent flexibility of airpower to conform to the situation. This success was enabled by the command and control structure in place, it allowed Quesada the latitude to accomplish the task before him and foster a relationship built on trust with his commander. This flexibility directly resulted in the Allied breakout following the Normandy invasion. However, trust is not always sufficient; it needs to be coupled with competence. In other words, appropriate airpower expertise must inform the commander's plan. As illustrated earlier, Quesada's lack of familiarity of the intricacies of bomber employment methods led to scores of friendly casualties. Arguably, had either general sought bomber expertise, or had it been available to the commander, the outcome may have more closely resembled expectations.

Chapter Three

AirLand Battle Doctrine

The strategic failure of United States in Vietnam forced a comprehensive doctrinal reevaluation within the Army. This led to a completely revamped operational doctrine, one that accounted for military technological advancements proven in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, including precision weapons, wire guided anti-tank weapons, and advanced surface to air weapons.²⁵ The result was the 1976 edition of FM 100-5. This focused Army doctrine again on fighting the Soviet Union in Europe. It called for an "active defense," which called for units to shift forces from less committed areas to the point of the main threat.²⁶ This attritionally focused concept was highly criticized for attempting to match strength with strength while surrendering the initiative to a vastly superior force.²⁷ Despite its shortcomings, a positive result from the doctrinal revolution surfaced in Army-Air Force collaboration. To investigate the expected synergism of employing Army and Air Force systems cooperatively, TRADOC and TAC set up a joint Air Land Forces Applications directorate (ALFA).²⁸

General Starry (a principal author of the 1976 version of FM 100-5) realized that there were serious shortcomings with this concept when he took over 5th Corps in 1977. To overcome these shortcomings, General Starry reorganized the way the fight would transpire. The corps would fight the deep battle, utilizing indirect fire weapons, organic aviation, and USAF strike assets, while divisions, brigades and battalions fought the close battle.²⁹ This structure would help solve the massive echeloned Soviet Army neglected by Active Defense, and was called AirLand Battle. In a measure of jointness,

²⁵ Richard M. Swain, "Filling The Void: The Operational Art and the U.S. Army" (Monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, Command and General Staff College, Ft Leavenworth, KS, 1988), 150.

²⁶ Ibid., 154.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Paul J. Montgomery, "Toward Greater Cooperation? FM 100-5 and AFDD 1" (master's thesis, Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS), 17.

²⁹ Lewis Sorley, ed., *Press On! Selected Works of General Donn A. Starry*, (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2009), 1278.

ALFA was charged with coordinating and implementing what would become known as AirLand Battle Doctrine. Building upon the success of the doctrinal revolution in the Army, the 1982 edition of FM 100-5 brought about AirLand Battle into doctrine. Focusing on maneuver and disruptive deep fires, it was operational in context and required coordination with the Air Force to implement. However, its publication caused debate and consternation within the Air Force.

In 1986, FM 100-5 was updated to codify the lessons learned from combat operations, teachings, exercises, wargames, and comments from the Army in the field. The key concepts of AirLand Battle doctrine—its recognition of the primacy of the operational level of warfare, the focus on seizing and retaining the initiative, and its insistence on the requirement for multi-service cooperation—remained unchanged. The addition of operational art and its tenet regarding identification of the enemy’s operational center-of-gravity (ostensibly his source of strength) and the concentration of superior combat power against that point to achieve a decisive success were the key concepts in the 1986 FM 100-5. According to this new doctrine, no particular echelon of command is solely or uniquely concerned with operational art. It contended that theater commanders and their chief subordinates usually plan and direct campaigns, while Army groups and armies normally design the major ground operations of a campaign. Corps and divisions would principally execute those major ground operations. In addition to the lasting precepts outlined above, the 1986 Army doctrine noted “Operational art requires broad vision, the ability to anticipate, a careful understanding of the relationship of means to ends, and effective joint and combined cooperation.”³⁰

During the Army’s period of conceptual reflection, the contentious concept of battlefield air interdiction (BAI) was introduced, which many within the Air Force interpreted as interdiction controlled by the Army. In response to BAI, General Creech (Commander of Tactical Air Command) “insisted that

³⁰ U.S. Army, *Field Manual 100-5: Operations* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1986), 179.

AirLand battle and its extended battlefield concept caused no change in the fundamental application of the principles of airpower...it implied a closer target, and the Army should have more interest and voice on BAI targets.” Ultimately, “Handling Air Interdiction (AI) targets was an Air Force responsibility.”³¹ In 1983, Secretary of Defense Weinberger directed the “means for improving the development of joint doctrine...” which resulted in a joint Army-Air Force Memorandum of Agreement, which pledged each service to annually review and update a list of thirty-one joint initiatives of mutual interest in implementing AirLand Battle.³² In sum, AirLand Battle ushered in a shift in the Air Force from a strategic bombing focus towards a more tactical focus—shrinking the conceptual gap about airpower employment. This reality is illustrated by the rise of the fighter generals and ultimately the dissolution of Strategic Air Command (SAC) and Tactical Air Command (TAC) and their replacement by Air Combat Command. Set against this conceptual backdrop, the second case study follows.

Desert Storm

During their first meeting, General Horner asked General Schwarzkopf two important questions: Did the USCENTCOM commander intend to keep the Air Component Commander acting as his “air boss” (as well as keeping the Naval Component Commander as his “sea boss”) and if so, who would be his Land Component Commander? Schwarzkopf answered that he would keep the Air Component Commander as his “air boss”, and that he (Schwarzkopf) would serve as both the Combatant Commander and Land Component Commander.³³ This command arrangement could have led to several problems, but this is where the relationship between airman and soldier mitigated the tension. According to General

³¹ Robert F. Futrell, *Ideas, Concepts, Doctrine: Basic Thinking in the United States Air Force 1961-1984* (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 1971), 554.

³² Futrell, *Ideas, Concepts, Doctrine*, 555.

³³ Diane T. Putney, *Airpower Advantage: Planning the Gulf War Air Campaign, 1989-1991* (Washington, D.C: Dept. of the Air Force, 2005), 4.

Horner, General Schwarzkopf had a clear idea how to use his Air Component Commander, and what his authority should be. It would not be long until this new command arrangement was tested under fire.

Following Saddam Hussein's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, the United States found itself with limited options. The existing Operations Plan (OPLAN), identified as 1002-XX (where XX is the review year) focused on defending Saudi Arabia, identifying Iran as the biggest regional threat. Based on a 1988 plan focused on power projection and relied heavily on early Air Force assets to demonstrate resolve, USCENTCOM re-examined the 1990 plan in light of the increased regional threat level.³⁴ This relook took the form of a command post exercise, testing the ability to command and control assets using bare base equipment. However, the nature of the plan and exercise was still defensive in nature, only simulating cross border (into Iraq) operations in the last two days of the drill.³⁵

In August of 1990, General Powell instructed USCENTCOM to begin planning using OPLAN 1002-90. This plan was designed to support policy objectives: secure the immediate, unconditional, and complete withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait, restore the legitimate government of Kuwait, assure the security and stability of the Persian Gulf region, and protect American lives.³⁶ Based on these objectives, the existing plans proved insufficient and lacked offensive operations to expel Iraq out of Kuwait. General Schwarzkopf realized this, and asked the Air Staff in Washington for input as he reconsidered his options. It is notable that he asked the Air Staff and not his Command's Air Component—as required by the Goldwater-Nichols Act—because the Air Component Commander had just assumed duties as the USCENTCOM-forward commander in Saudi Arabia.

³⁴ Eliot Cohen, ed., *Gulf War Air Power Survey, Volume I: Planning and Command and Control* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Air Force, 1994), 21.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 46.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 83.

Instant Thunder

The air plan came in the form of an offensive option crafted by the Pentagon's Checkmate Division led by Air Force Colonel John Warden. Warden had developed a theory about airpower employment throughout his course of instruction in political science at Texas A&M and his instruction on operational art at the National Defense University. His theory focused on employing airpower at the operational level of war, based on the modern interpretation of Clausewitz's centers of gravity.³⁷ He presented his air options against Iraq's centers of gravity to General Schwarzkopf in his now-famous five concentric rings format. Although not an exact match, Warden's definition of "center of gravity" mirrored the Clausewitzian (and US Army) definition. FM 100-5 suggested attacking the center of gravity "is—or should be—the focus of all operations."³⁸ Warden preferred to reference a center of gravity as "the point where the enemy is most vulnerable and the point where an attack will have the best chance of being decisive."³⁹ Small differences aside, the plan was named Instant Thunder and it provided the heretofore-missing offensive option to meet policy directives.

General Schwarzkopf readily accepted the center of gravity terminology used in the Instant Thunder briefing—the same terminology permeated FM 100-5. He also loved the plan (bridging the airpower conceptualization gap), offering "You've restored my confidence in the Air Force."⁴⁰ However, the plan was not a fully developed theater air campaign plan, despite Colonel Warden's intention of decisive victory through airpower. In all, General Schwarzkopf now had an offensive option that he could modify to meet the situation facing General Horner in the Saudi Arabia and that he face himself in short order.

³⁷ Putney, *Airpower Advantage*, 38.

³⁸ U.S. Army, *Field Manual 100-5: Operations* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1986), 179.

³⁹ John A. Warden III, *The Air Campaign: Planning for Combat* (Washington, D.C.: NDU Press, 1988.), 9.

⁴⁰ Putney, *Airpower Advantage*, 57.

The actual campaign plan against Iraq encompassed Warden's Instant Thunder, but its real value was that it forced Schwarzkopf to begin thinking about airpower employment and how it could be used to attack what he felt was the Iraqi COG. With the airpower conceptualization gap closing, the USCENTCOM commander and his airman could concentrate at the task at hand, not arguing over how to employ airpower. This thinking formed the basis for his phases of the campaign: Phase 1 – Strategic Air Campaign, Phase – Air Supremacy over Kuwait, Phase 3 – Battlefield Preparation (Republican Guard first, followed by Regular Iraqi Fielded Forces, Phase 4 – Ground Attack.⁴¹

Lieutenant General Horner understood General Schwarzkopf's plan, and as an airman, understood that Warden's Instant Thunder concept would not meet the CENTCOM commander's intent. Despite Schwarzkopf's appreciation of Instant Thunder, he never intended it to be a stand-alone campaign plan; he trusted the Air Component Commander to create that. As such, when Colonel Warden presented Instant Thunder to General Horner, the CENTCOM-forward commander was not as receptive as his stateside boss. Horner understood that his mission (among other things) was the defense of Saudi Arabia, and without any ground forces to speak of, Instant Thunder did very little to stop the potential Iraqi onslaught, and may even provoke it. Although he understood Schwarzkopf's plan, General Horner resented the fact that Schwarzkopf asked the Air Staff for help creating an air plan in his area of responsibility—it brought back bad memories of Washington politicians selecting targets as they did in Vietnam. To placate his airman, Schwarzkopf told Horner that this he needed his judgment and expertise as the CENTCOM commander forward—a task he trusted only Horner with—and the Air Component Commander would assume full responsibility for the air campaign as soon as the preliminary work was complete.⁴² This, in and of itself, speaks volumes of the trust Schwarzkopf placed in Horner. If the trust wasn't there, or there was an irreconcilable personality conflict, Horner would have fallen to the last rank

⁴¹ Ibid., 348.

⁴² Putney, *Airpower Advantage*, 32.

of Schwarzkopf's advisors. During the stress of combat and great responsibility, commander's turn to those they trust. Schwarzkopf trusted Horner.⁴³

In his role as USCENTCOM's Air Component Commander, Lieutenant General Horner rewarded General Schwarzkopf's trust by anticipating his boss's needs and questions. The air boss understood that the CENTCOM commander was under tremendous pressure from Washington. To help his boss deal with the nation's civilian leadership, General Horner directed his staff to quickly send reports of the air action to the Schwarzkopf's CENTCOM staff. Horner appreciated the reality that the CENTCOM headquarters would get "Mucho Heato from DC when they could not feed the Info Monster every three to four hours."⁴⁴

General Horner also demonstrated a high level of competence when Schwarzkopf sent him to Saudi Arabia to be the CENTCOM forward commander. The air boss' competence helped General Schwarzkopf deal with the increasing complexities of the growing force structure and the requirements surrounding preparations for major combat operations. Although he preferred to confer with his staff, Schwarzkopf found it necessary (because of the scope of the operation and short preparation time) to issue orders and trust that they would be followed as he intended.⁴⁵ As such, he told Horner he was the senior man in Saudi Arabia and would be responsible for the deployment and bed down of the aircraft required for the war, ensuring the defense of Saudi Arabia, and establishing good working relationships with regional allies.⁴⁶ The Air Component Commander took on this task with zeal, bedding down more than double the expected aircraft and providing his boss with more firepower to thwart an Iraqi attack before the ground forces arrived. More importantly, with this act Horner's responsibilities went from

⁴³ Richard G. Davis, *On Target: Organizing and Executing the Strategic Air Campaign Against Iraq* (Honolulu, HI: University Press of the Pacific, 2005), 39.

⁴⁴ Chuck Horner, quoted in Eliot Cohen, ed., *Gulf War Air Power Survey*, 61.

⁴⁵ *It Doesn't Take a Hero: The Autobiography of General H. Norman Schwarzkopf* (New York: Bantam, 1993), 362.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 355.

primarily air component issues to theater-wide issues such as international protocol and customs, the cross border movement of military equipment, and Arab sensitivities about military women driving vehicles.⁴⁷ General Horner justified the level of trust the CENTCOM commander placed in him.

In sum, General Horner made a great effort to develop a relationship with his commander based on trust. To illustrate this point, during a 10th anniversary retrospective of Desert Storm, the former Air Component Commander offered, “The one thing you need to understand if you’re going to understand Desert Storm is that the relationship among the four people [Schwarzkopf and his component commanders] at this table...was highly unusual. Such a relationship probably never existed before, and it probably won’t exist in the future. The trust and respect we had for each other was unbelievable...”⁴⁸ Once again, as in the previous case study, success depended on trust based on competence between the supported commander and his airman.

⁴⁷ Putney, *Airpower Advantage*, 180.

⁴⁸ Chuck Horner, quoted in Benjamin S. Lambeth, *NATO's Air War for Kosovo: A Strategic and Operational Assessment* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), 194.

Chapter Four

Effects Based Theory and Doctrine

Lessons learned from Operation Desert Storm created an institutional shift in airpower conceptualization. The architects of the 1991 victory employed a center of gravity (COG) approach to warfare to defeat Iraqi forces. According to Colonel Deptula, (a principal architect of the air campaign) “The design of the air campaign grew out of a mindset questioning how to impose force against enemy systems to achieve specific effects that would contribute directly to the military and political objectives of the Coalition. It began with a critical examination of potential strategic centers of gravity, their constituent operational systems (operational centers of gravity), and led to identifying the set of individual targets making up each system (tactical centers of gravity).”⁴⁹ As codified in 1998 Air Force doctrine, COG analysis enables the identification of vital target sets within the adversary army or national infrastructure. If successfully attacked, these targets should have the greatest effect on enemy capabilities at the operational and strategic levels of war.⁵⁰ Therefore, a clear air and space strategy statement defines how the air commander plans to employ air and space capabilities and forces to achieve the air objectives in support of the JFC’s objectives.⁵¹ In sum, both Army and Air Force leaders embraced this airpower conceptualization. However, as illustrated by the next case study, a common understanding about how best to employ airpower did not guarantee a smooth working relationship.

Kosovo

Operation Allied Force in 1999 was a NATO operation to end the human-rights abuses by Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic. Consisting primarily of a 78-day air war, the operation

⁴⁹ David Deptula, *Effects Based Operations: Change in the Nature of Warfare* (Aerospace Education Foundation, 2001), 14.

⁵⁰ U.S. Air Force, *Air Force Doctrine Document 2*, (Washington, D.C: Dept. of the Air Force, 1998), 79.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 80.

witnessed a marked departure from the good working relationships evidenced in the previous two case studies. There are several underlying reasons, the first being a lack of a coherent strategy to meet the objectives presented to the Yugoslav President. According to General Clark, the “terms were simple, and not negotiable. Milosevic must stop the killing. He must get his troops out of Kosovo. He must accept an international military presence, with NATO at its core, to establish security inside Kosovo. He must unconditionally allow all refugees to go home and live in safety. And he must work to build a lasting political solution based on the Rambouillet plan.”⁵² These objectives nested with President Clinton’s stated objectives: to demonstrate the seriousness of NATO’s opposition to aggression, to deter Milosevic from continuing and escalating his attacks on helpless civilians and if needed, to damage Serbia’s capacity to wage war against Kosovo by seriously diminishing its military capabilities. Unfortunately, as he spoke of his vision, the President stated, “I don’t intend to put our troops in Kosovo to fight a war.”⁵³ Secretary of State Albright reinforced this sentiment during a television interview, “I don’t see this as a long-term operation.”⁵⁴ Even the JFACC, Lieutenant General Short thought they were “going through the motions to some degree” and “we’re probably never going to drop a bomb.”⁵⁵

The road towards strategic ambiguity geared towards meeting national security objectives evolved through differences in perceptions. There were, in fact, attempts at a coherent strategy based on an airpower focused strategy-to-task methodology. The most robust of these was Operation Allied Talon, which according to General John Jumper, the United States Air Forces in Europe Commander, was a

⁵² Wesley Clark, “Effectiveness and Determination,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization website 12 June 1999, <http://www.nato.int/kosovo/articles/a990602a.htm> (accessed February 10, 2011).

⁵³ Francis X. Clines, “NATO Opens Barrage Against Serbs as Clinton Denounces Brutal Repression,” The New York Times website, <http://theater.nytimes.com/learning/general/specials/kosovo/032599kosovo-rdp.html>, 25 March 1999, (accessed February 10, 2011).

⁵⁴ John T. Correll, “Assumptions in the fall of Kosovo,” Air Force Magazine, June 1999, <http://www.airforce-magazine.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/1999/June%201999/0699edit.aspx> (accessed February 10, 2011).

⁵⁵ PBS “Frontline: War in Europe,” PBS website, 1999, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kosovo/> (accessed August 25, 2010).

“true phased air campaign rooted in effects-based targeting and aimed at achieving concrete military objectives.”⁵⁶ However, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe General Wesley Clark “elected to cut and paste different elements of the different plans that he thought were most appropriate and labeled the resultant product Operation Allied Force.”⁵⁷ The “cut and paste” of the available options was based on General Clark’s assumption that the operation would only take two or three days. His planning guidance of “I’m only going to give you 48 hours” resulted in his plan consisting of about fifty air strike targets.⁵⁸ However, the emboldened Yugoslav Army was determined to withstand the punishment dealt by the airstrikes. This fact, and the convoluted target approval process coupled with an expected three-day air war, actually saw Milosevic’s forces increase in strength over the course of five weeks.⁵⁹ This reality elucidated the emerging differences in targeting opinions between the Combined Force Commander and his air boss, forcing General Clark to begin searching for target sets beyond the first fifty allocated at the onset.

Clark and Short both subscribed to the doctrinal interpretations of Clausewitz’s center of gravity regarding force employment. However, they did not agree on what the COG was during this operation. This was because, in the words of Richard Davis, “Given a soldier’s or airman’s career-long training, indoctrination in loyalty to his fellows, his unit, and his service and the perspective of a certain kind of warfare in a particular medium, Army or Air Force parochialisms became more understandable.”⁶⁰ General Clark’s “Number 1 priority, which he expressed to me every day on the [video-teleconference session], was the fielded forces in Kosovo. And we all understood that and followed the direction of the SACEUR.” It meant that the bulk of the force was to be directed against

⁵⁶ John Jumper, quoted in Lambeth, *NATO’s Air War for Kosovo*, 12.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2000), 99.

⁵⁹ Craig R. Whitney, “NATO Chief Admits Bombs Fail to Stem Serb Operations,” *New York Times*, April 28, 1999, <http://www.nytimes.com/1999/04/28/world/crisis-in-the-balkans-nato-nato-chief-admits-bombs-fail-to-stem-serb-operations.html> (accessed February 10, 2011).

⁶⁰ Davis, *The 31 Initiatives*, 46.

targets in Kosovo in order to hit the 3rd Army because of a belief that the best way to stop ethnic cleansing was to destroy the instruments of ethnic cleansing directly.⁶¹ By contrast, Lieutenant General Short said in an interview with *Air Force Magazine* regarding the conduct of the war and its implications for future operations, he “never felt that the [Serb] 3rd Army in Kosovo was a center of gravity.”⁶² The JFACC thought Milosevic had written the 3rd Army off, “And body bags coming home from Kosovo didn’t bother [Milosevic], and it didn’t bother the leadership elite [in Belgrade].”

SACEUR and his JFACC never reconciled this difference. To this point, Dana Priest captured the following banter between Clark and Short as they discussed targets during a daily VTC: As U.S. aircraft were about to attack the Serbian Special police headquarters in Belgrade, Short said, “This is jewel in the crown” to which Clark replied “To me, the jewel in the crown is when those B-52’s rumble across Kosovo.” Short, in turn, replied, “you and I have know for weeks that we have different jewelers,” which prompted the SACEUR to end the discussion with “My jeweler outranks yours.”⁶³ These differences in targeting opinion complicated an already poor plan.

As the first three days of airstrikes failed to stop Milosevic, General Clark ordered the development of 2,000 target candidates. Unfortunately, these targets were not linked to any coherent strategy. In response to his order to propose targets, his subordinates replied, “Give us the targets and we’ll take them out,” to which SACEUR replied, “You don’t get it. You develop the targets.”⁶⁴ This led to targets divorced from Yugoslavia’s military capabilities (General Clark’s COG), and led to what William Arkin labeled “a mechanical process of meticulous selection with little true military

⁶¹ John A. Tirpak, “Short’s View of the Air Campaign,” *Air Force Magazine*, September 1999. <http://www.airforce-magazine.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/1999/September%201999/0999watch.aspx> (accessed December 25, 2010).

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Dana Priest, “United NATO Front was Divided Within,” *Washington Post*, Sept 21, 1999, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/daily/sept99/airwar21.htm> (accessed February 10, 2011).

⁶⁴ Ignatieff, *Virtual War*, 99.

justification.”⁶⁵ All of the disagreements aside, General Short kept the following perspective, “When you get orders that you think are inappropriate, or that you do not agree with, then you have only two options: You can accept those orders, having made an attempt to change them, or you can take your stars off and put them on the table. I did my best to persuade my boss to go in a different direction, but he said no. So I felt that it was my job to do what he asked me to do as well as I possibly could, and again attempt to persuade him to do something else.”⁶⁶

Assessing relationship between General Clark and Lieutenant General Short highlights a lack of trust seen in the two previous case studies. In the first two case studies, the air boss and his commander agreed in the application of airpower to accomplish the mission. By contrast, the differences in thinking about the COG and employing airpower against it led to General Clark not to trust General Short and go around him for advice, micro-managing the air war. In his memoirs General Clark offered, “My real window on the operation was going to be provided by the senior American Airman in Europe, John Jumper. Although he wasn’t in the NATO chain of command for this operation, as the senior American airman, he was my advisor and had all the technology and communications to keep a real time read on the operations. As Mike Short’s commander in the American chain of command, he also had a certain amount of influence in a advisory capacity.”⁶⁷ This, as Arkin points out, shows that Clark viewed Short as a subordinate to be managed, not a trusted source for airpower advice.⁶⁸ This mistrust forced General Clark to micromanage the war, although he could have left the day-to-day operations to his JTF commander. Rather, he involved himself in nearly every aspect of the day-to-day operations; even going so far as to choose the weapon to be used against a certain target. This prompted General Short to say in a

⁶⁵ William M. Arkin quoted in Lambeth, *NATO's Air War for Kosovo*, 50.

⁶⁶ Michael Short, “An Airman’s Lessons from Kosovo,” in *From Maneuver Warfare to Kosovo*, ed. John Andreas Olsen (The Royal Norwegian Air Force Academy, 2001,) 269.

⁶⁷ Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War: Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Future of Combat* (New York: Public Affairs, 2002), 195.

⁶⁸ William M. Arkin quoted in Lambeth, *NATO's Air War for Kosovo*, 192.

PBS interview, “the use of VTCs improperly allowed senior leadership to reach down to levels they did not need to be involved in.”⁶⁹ In fact, after one of the many VTC disagreements between Clark and Short, the Air Component Commander was seen “slumping back in his chair, folding his arms, and mentally checking out.”⁷⁰

The impact of the relationship between the General Clark and Lieutenant General Short on the ultimate outcome of Operation Allied Force is not readily apparent since Milosevic surrendered after seventy-eight days of bombing. What is apparent, however, is the relationship’s impact on the conceptualization of airpower employment. As such, the service dialogue about the casual factors surrounding the outcome is reminiscent of the early days of airpower. From the Army’s point of view, it was the looming ground invasion that ultimately forced the outcome. According to 2001’s *Concepts for the Objective Force*, “For some opponents, mere punishment from afar is not enough. With these adversaries, the only way to guarantee victory is to put our boots on his ground, impose ourselves on his territory, and destroy him in his sanctuaries This is the foundation of decisiveness.”⁷¹ By contrast, the Air Force espoused its own service centric ideas; according to then Air Force Chief of Staff, General Michael Ryan, “The lights went out, the water went off, the petroleum production ceased, the bridges were down, communications were down, the economics of the country were slowly falling apart, and I think he came to the realization that in a strategic sense, he wasn’t prepared to continue this. . . . [Milosevic’s] strategic center of gravity was in and around Belgrade, [the focus of] . . . support for Milosevic and his repressive regime.”⁷² The inability of General Clark and Lieutenant General Short to

⁶⁹ PBS “Frontline: War in Europe,” PBS website, 1999, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/kosovo/> (accessed August 25, 2010).

⁷⁰ Dana Priest, “United NATO Front was Divided Within,” Washington Post, Sept 21, 1999, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/daily/sept99/airwar21.htm> (accessed February 10, 2011).

⁷¹ David E. Johnson, *Learning Large Lessons: The Evolving Roles of Ground Power and Air Power in the Post-Cold War Era* (Santa Monica, CA.: RAND Corporation, 2006), 75.

⁷² Ibid., 78.

resolve their differences is indicative of service differences concerning the proper use of air power—an issue that will reappear in Operation Anaconda.

Chapter Five

Irregular Warfare and the Current Operating Environment

In the studies presented, airpower served as an offensive weapon, employing kinetic operations to set conditions needed for the employment of ground forces. However, success in irregular warfare (IW) hinges on the careful use of military force, requiring a different conceptualization about airpower. In this vein, kinetic options available through airpower must be used judiciously and other components of airpower need to be used in support of the local ground commander. The non-kinetic aspects of airpower such as Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR), air mobility and Electronic Warfare (EW) support are key capabilities that can be indispensable assets in IW efforts. The potential benefits of ISR include utilizing a more robust collection management capability provided by the Air Force. Inter and intra-theater airlift provide the ground forces an increase in speed and maneuverability within the AO. EW assets can be utilized to mitigate or disable remotely detonated improvised explosive devices. However, to be truly effective, the supported local ground commander must have trusted airpower experts that can integrate into the land forces planning process. However, it is not just kinetic airpower expertise that the land force commander needs, it is expertise along the spectrum of Air Force capabilities. This is where the lessons learned from Quesada, Horner and Short are best applied: in the command and control nodes linking airmen to soldier.

Anchoring the support role in today's IW operations are the non-kinetic platforms detailed earlier— ISR, mobility and EW platforms. However, to be successful in COIN (of which IW is a subset), the decision-making authority is pushed down to the lowest level. As Army Field Manual 3-24, asserts, “Many important decisions are not made by Generals,” and “senior leaders set the proper direction and climate with thorough training and clear guidance; then they trust their subordinates to do the right

thing.”⁷³ To foster this sense of trust, Air Force AFDD 2-3 (Irregular Warfare), states “In some cases, the Commander, Air Force Forces (COMAFFOR)/Joint Force Air Component Commander may delegate some aspects of planning and decision-making to subordinate Airmen positioned at lower levels within the TACS. Increasing the role and authority of subordinate Airmen may provide more innovative and effective uses of Air Force capabilities.”⁷⁴ In other words, apply the lessons of Quesada and Bradley, as well as Schwarzkopf and Horner—build trust through competence to allow airpower’s inherent flexibility to conform to the situation.

While Air Force doctrine advocates the delegation of planning and decision making during IW, it does not offer an increase in expertise at the levels of command making day-to-day decisions. Instead, the Air Force utilizes a liaison element to ensure the Air Component Commander’s intent and planning efforts are in concert with land force efforts. However, this liaison (the Joint Air Component Coordination Element) is located at high-level headquarters, and is removed from the decisions being made at the lower echelons. Furthermore, in response to a question regarding the usefulness of the Air Component Coordination Element during IW, the 3d Air Support Operations Group commander, Col Bretscher offers, “the work is being done below the JACCE structure.”⁷⁵ In effect, the JACCE is of limited utility during IW, in large part due to the inability of the JACCE to have any meaningful input during planning within the battle space owner’s staff.

Implementing Lessons Learned

There are two areas in the Air Force’s theater air control system that interface with land forces that can be utilized to provide full spectrum air power expertise: the Joint Air Coordination Element and

⁷³ U.S. Army, *Field Manual 3-24: CounterInsurgency* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2006), 1-28.

⁷⁴ U.S. Air Force, *Air Force Doctrine Document 2-3: Irregular Warfare* (Washington, D.C: Department of the Air Force, 2007), 9.

⁷⁵ Seth P. Bretscher, e-mail message to the author, 14 December 2009.

the Air Support Operations Center. To fully explain their potential for implementing the lessons learned from the previous case studies, the following section will highlight these command and control nodes current intended doctrinal employment, and how improving expertise relevant to the current operating environment will foster a sense of trust (apply the lessons learned from the three case studies) between the ground commander and the airmen supporting him.

The Joint Air Component Coordination Element

In current doctrine, the CFACC establishes one or more joint air component coordination elements (JACCE) with the Joint Force Commander's or a component commander's headquarters to better integrate air and space operations with surface operations.⁷⁶ According to AFDD 2-8, "the make-up of the ACCE is dependent on the scope of the operation and the size of the staff they will liaise with. The ACCE should be tailored with the expertise necessary to perform effectively. Element expertise may include plans, operations, intelligence, airspace management, logistics, space, and air mobility, as needed."⁷⁷ This construct provides the JACCE director flexibility and allows them to advise on any facet of air and space power employment. These elements act as the Air Component Commander's primary representatives to the respective commanders and facilitate interaction between the respective staffs. It is this staff interaction that ensures the JFC commander's mission utilizes airpower in the most efficient manner. It is important to note the JACCE should not replace, replicate, or circumvent normal request mechanisms already in place in the component staffs. The JACCE is a liaison function, not a C2 node. Seemingly, the JACCE is a natural outgrowth from the lessons learned from the case studies presented. However, this assumes a top-down tasking strategy, and is not consistent with the proven best practices involved in IW, and doesn't foster a sense of trust through competence with the battle space owner.

⁷⁶ U.S. Air Force, *Air Force Doctrine Document 2-8: Command and Control* (Washington, D.C: Dept. of the Air Force, 2007), 63.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

Despite the JACCE's prescribed advisory role, the JACCE supporting IW efforts in Afghanistan has been empowered to direct assets in support of the land component. This is the result of a multitude of white papers and monographs discussing either creating a "CFACC forward" or an empowered the JACCE with delegated control authority.⁷⁸ Although it is too soon to ascertain the mission impact of this recent development, it resembles the lesson learned from the first case study. Major General Quesada controlled all of the assets in his command, and could direct them in concert with General Bradley's overall scheme of maneuver. While Quesada's efforts worked well supporting VII Corp's breakout, the effects of the heavy bombing plan in the beginning of Operation Cobra were lessened by the absence of bomber expertise integrated into the overall plan. While empowering the Air Component Coordination Element to direct support to the land commander is a good start, the following discussion shows that it does not adequately support the local battle space owner.

The JACCE concept gained traction following Operation Anaconda, where "one of the more debatable aspects of Anaconda involves the CJTF decision not to include the Combined Forces Air Component Commander in planning."⁷⁹ In an effort to reverse the trend of keeping air planners (or at least air planners with sufficient rank) out of the early portion of the planning process, the Air Force created the JACCE to prevent future planning failures similar to that of Anaconda. During planning for the operation, "the division (10th MTN) argued it would not need airpower."⁸⁰ Arguably stemming from the lack of airpower in training exercises done at the Army's National Training Center, this embodied the "air will be available if it is included in planning or not" mentality.⁸¹ This is a continuation of the issues of trust illustrated in the Kosovo case study, where Clark didn't seek airpower expertise during his

⁷⁸ Sonny Blankinsop, "Operational Flexibility: Options for the 21st Century Air Component Commander," (master's thesis, Air University, 2008), V.

⁷⁹ Richard B. Andres and Jeffrey B. Hukill, "Anaconda, A Flawed Joint Planning Process," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, no. 47 (4th Quarter 2007), 137.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

planning. The JACCE, in theory, would provide an airman's point of view during the planning process, alleviating many of the misconceptions regarding the role and availability of airpower—the key lesson to takeaway from the present case studies, and obviously not learned prior to Anaconda.

Currently, the USCENTCOM CFACC is utilizing a JACCE in both the Iraqi and Afghan areas of operation. While the missions and composition of the two Joint Task Forces supported by JACCEs are similar, there are significant differences that need to be addressed. In Iraq, “The Air Component Coordination Element represents the Coalition Forces Air Component Commander to the Commander, Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) and facilitates information flow between staffs at the Combined Air and Space Operations Center CAOC. The director serves as the CFACC's primary advisor and personal representative to the MNF-I Commander while ensuring the synchronization of all air component assets into MNF-I combat operations & AFFOR issues.”⁸² To accomplish its responsibilities, the MNF-I JACCE director assembled the following expertise: Deputy Director, Space planner, Mobility Planner, ISR planner, Strike Planner, Airspace planner.⁸³ Although these planners (and the JACCE writ large) were positioned to assist the planning efforts at the JTF level, specifically MNF-I, the need for the expertise within the JACCE resided elsewhere. According to Maj Sammons, a member of this ACCE in 2008, the ACCE director sent the ISR planner and intelligence officer supporting to lower echelons. As a prime example of the lessons learned from the first case study, these members went to an Tactical Air Control Party (TACP—detailed next section) to assist the unit in integrating non-kinetic airpower into the local ground commander's scheme of maneuver.⁸⁴

In Afghanistan, the ACCE employs a similar staff composition. According to Lt Col Hohn, the ISAF ACCE director of staff in 2009, the team is composed of a Deputy Director, Chief of Staff (since this position also serves as the chief planner, the ACCE levied the requirement that this position be filled

⁸² Charles Sammons, email message to the author, 30 November 2009.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Charles Sammons, interview by the author, Maxwell AFB, AL, February 11, 2010.

by a graduate of an advanced studies program), Space planner, Mobility Planner, Ops planner, Strike Planner, Intel planner.⁸⁵ Furthermore, these elements act as the CFACC's primary representatives to the respective commanders and facilitate interaction between the respective staffs. During an interview, Lt Col Hohn indicated that the JACCE supporting ISAF is not involved in planning, rather they facilitate problem solving (that involve airpower) through the expertise in the mission areas each staff member possesses. These JACCEs in Afghanistan and Iraq illustrate the requirement to get the expertise that resides at the JACCE down to the decision maker's level—where the next command and control node resides.

The Air Support Operations Center

In addition to the JACCE, Air Support Operations Center is a key node in the command and control construct. AFDD 2-1.3 (Counterland) notes that the ASOC is the primary control agency of the Theater Air Control System (TACS) for execution of air and space power in direct support of land operations—its primary mission is to control air operations short of the Fire Support Coordination Line (FSCL).⁸⁶ There are two significant points to be made regarding this role. First, is the doctrinally prescribed mission of “direct support.” Given that the current IW fight is a predominately a ground effort, the role the Air Force is playing is in direct support of ground forces. As CSAF General Schwartz noted, “the nature of today's counterinsurgency fight emphasizes the capabilities that our ground force teammates provide, and we will, without hesitation, ensure their success.”⁸⁷ Second, the notion of controlling air operations short of the FSCL is obviated in today's non-linear IW fight, because the battle space is focused around dynamic pockets of kinetic operations surrounded by large areas of non-kinetic

⁸⁵ Todd Hohn, interview by the author, Maxwell AFB, AL 17 November 2009.

⁸⁶ U.S. Air Force, *Air Force Doctrine Document 2-1.3: Counterland* (Washington, D.C: Dept. of the Air Force, 2006), 55.

⁸⁷ Norton Schwartz, “Keynote Address” (address, Air Force Association's Air Warfare Symposium and Technology Exposition, Washington, D.C., Sept. 15, 2009). <http://www.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-090915-240.pdf> (accessed September 11, 2010).

operations. Additionally, this doctrine document makes no delineation between kinetic and non-kinetic operations. This notion is furthered by the following line in the doctrine definition: “Normally collocated with the senior Army fires element, the ASOC coordinates and directs air support for land forces at corps level and below. The ASOC also provides rapid response to requests for air support and is capable of assisting time-sensitive targeting and friendly force location information to close air support, air interdiction, suppression of enemy air defenses, air mobility, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions.”⁸⁸

Another crucial element of the ASOC is its planning role. The ASOC director also serves as the Corps Air Liaison Officer (ALO), who is responsible for incorporating airpower into ground scheme of maneuver. In this capacity, the Corps ALO works in concert with the Commanding General’s staff during course of action (COA) development, providing air expertise and assets (made available). Another aspect of the ASOC’s planning role is less obvious. The ASOC has tactical control over all of the TACPs in theater; consisting of an air liaison officer and terminal attack controllers that plan and integrate airpower into their supported commander’s scheme of maneuver. The void in non-kinetic expertise at the tactical level of war—arguably where the main effort resides during IW—is where we harness the historical experiences of operational level commanders that forged the air ground team in today’s wholly different operating environment.

As masters of the air medium, it is incumbent on the Air Force to provide expertise to Army units in garrison and downrange. The Air Force has acknowledged this change in the support requirement, noting in the “Integration of Airpower in Operational Level Planning” report that: “the TACS is organized for Major Combat Operations (MCO), but not for operations other than MCO.”⁸⁹ Additionally, the 2008 AF/Marine Corps Tiger Team Report is yet another report that addresses this shift:

⁸⁸ U.S. Air Force, *Air Force Doctrine Document 2-1.3: Counterland* (Washington, D.C: Dept. of the Air Force, 2006), 56.

⁸⁹ U.S. Air Force, “HQ USAF/A9L Lessons Learned Report: Integration of Airpower in Operational Level Planning,” August 2008, 9.

“...the Air Force has not deployed enough officers at the Brigade level to actively participate in planning while supporting operations, and execution takes precedence. On a positive note, since the CFACC recently placed Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance and Electronic Warfare liaisons at the lower levels of Army planning and execution the quality of ISR and EW requests has significantly increased. A similar approach to augmenting the ALOs could yield meaningful gains in air/ground integration.”⁹⁰

However, simply acknowledging the need is not enough, and the Air Force has moved to provide this expertise. According to Col Bretscher, the 3d Air Support Operations Group Commander, “ISR liaisons are at the Brigade level - we've had them there for some time. One issue is that they currently work for the Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Division at the Air Operations Center. We're working to move them under the Expeditionary Air Support Operations Group (EASOG) and Squadron structure.” He also noted, “EW officers support the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) task forces and at the Division and Corps headquarters.”⁹¹ There are several key pieces of information to dissect here. First, these changes in the level of support to the lower echelons of Army units are happening in theater, and do not address any in garrison support. Second, the ISR liaisons still work for the Air Operations Center, and are therefore not part of the TACP supporting the local ground commander. This can be problematic, as the ALO (the officer-in-charge of the TACP) may not have the complete picture regarding airpower. The same can be said for the EW support. These airmen are directly supporting the IED task force, as opposed to the TACP. This is why the Air Force is trying to align these functions under the EASOG; only the EASOG that provides the framework to support the Army across the levels of command. While a good start, the ultimate result is the Air Liaison Officer limited to providing kinetic expertise to the unit he supports. The effort to provide full spectrum air power

⁹⁰ U.S. Air Force, “Air Force/Marine Corps Tiger Team Trip Report,” March 2008, 11.

⁹¹ Seth P. Bretscher, e-mail message to the author, 14 December 2009.

expertise is piecemealed from different task forces, forcing the ground planner to seek out this expertise (assuming he knows where to look.)

Although the Air Force is attempting to provide the needed non-kinetic expertise where needed in theater, similar attempts have not started to happen in garrison. The Air Force is seemingly not learning its lessons from Operation Anaconda. The Army needs to move past the “air will just be there” mentality and the Air Force the key roadblock impeding progress. There is, in fact, a proposal going forward to increase the in-garrison support provided to the Army, and according to Col Bretscher, the proposal “outlines the augmentation that will go to the three ASOGs and 10 divisions to meet the corps and division TACP needs. Authorizations are easy in most cases (although giving each ASOG a second O-6 position is very difficult) - getting the bodies to flow is much harder.”⁹² Despite an increase in air expertise available, not until the USAF permanently apportions more airmen (specifically airmen with expertise in Air Force non-kinetic capabilities) as liaisons to lower echelon Army maneuver units, there will not be an institutional sense of trust. This lack of trust will ultimately prevent airpower’s inherent flexibility from conforming to the situation.

Conclusion

Trust between Airman and Soldier is the most important consideration in airpower employment. Through historical studies, this monograph has shown that command and control structures that foster trust through competence can bridge the gap created by conceptual differences in airpower application. Similarly, command structures that bring airpower expertise to the supported commander allow for a synergistic application of the tools at the disposal of the commander. Although the case studies presented represented major combat operations, and are different than the current operating environment, their lessons are still valid.

⁹² Ibid.

As Chapter Two first illustrated, a central lesson is trust must be accompanied by competence. These are inextricably linked and are vital to military success. Quesada went to great lengths to earn General Bradley's trust, which in turn allowed the inherent flexibility of airpower to conform to the situation. This success was enabled by the command and control structure in place, it allowed Quesada the latitude to accomplish the task before him and foster a relationship built on trust with his commander. Similarly, the trust given by Schwarzkopf and the competence exemplified by Horner during Operation Desert Storm ensured a rapid military decision. As the relationship between General Clark and General Short show, trust becomes a scarce commodity when competence is perceived as missing. This lesson is applicable in the current operating environment, albeit on a different scale.

Flowing from the first lesson, the second key takeaway from these studies is the need for airpower expertise to inform the commander's plan. This allows airpower's inherent flexibility to conform to the situation. In all three case studies, the command and control structure in place gave allowed airpower expertise to inform the plan. In today's operating environment "many important decisions are not made by Generals," and until the USAF apports more airmen (specifically airmen with expertise in Air Force non-kinetic capabilities) as liaisons to lower echelon Army maneuver units, the conceptualization of airpower employment will be divorced from reality.

This monograph showed the historical relevance of trust and expertise when it comes to applying airpower across the spectrum of combat. Currently, many of the recommendations suggested here are being debated inside the USAF. However, change is often slow and extremely difficult to implement. Future monographs covering this topic should consider researching the tailorable manning requirements for the USAF to provide expertise to Army commanders engaged in IW, and the level of detailed airpower expertise needed to be of value to the supported commander.

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